

# The Political Background of the Arybbas Decree

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**A**RYBBAS, king of the Molossians, was an important figure in the policies of Philip II of Macedon. In the last phase of their relations, Philip expelled Arybbas from his kingdom and put Alexander, Arybbas' nephew, on the throne; Arybbas sought refuge in Athens, where he and his descendants were voted various honors.

Because of contradictions in our sources, the chronology of these events was for a long time improperly understood. In 1975 R. M. Errington published in this journal the basic work clarifying these problems.<sup>1</sup> Subsequent studies, however, have ignored rather than refuted his arguments. Further consideration will both support his chronology and show it to offer a key to the interpretation of Arybbas' character and career, together with some interesting consequences for Philip's.

We must begin by considering the extant Athenian decree, passed at the time of his arrival there.<sup>2</sup> The first part of the inscription consists of a decree based on a routine *probouleuma* for such grants by the *boule* (3–35), confirming citizenship and other privileges that had been granted his father and grandfather, and adding the protection of the council and the generals and access to the *boule* and people. Provisions are made to inscribe the decree; Arybbas is to be invited to the prytaneum to δέιπνον, and his companions to ξένια. Other issues that he has raised are to be discussed. There follows a rider added in the *ekklesia*, containing two provisions (35–42):

τὰ μὲν ἄλλ-  
α καθάπερ τῆι βουλῆι. ἐ[ὰν δ]-  
έ τις Ἄρυββα[ν] β[ι]αίωι θ[ανά]-

<sup>1</sup> R. M. ERRINGTON, "Arybbas the Molossian," *GRBS* 16 (1975) 41–50 (hereafter 'Errington').

<sup>2</sup> *IG* II<sup>2</sup> 226 [Tod II 173]; M. B. Osborne, *Naturalization in Athens* (Brussels 1981–82) I D–14. Its beginning and date are lost; beneath the text are inscribed crowns, two olive and one laurel, signalling Arybbas' victories in the Olympia and Pythia. Below this is a relief of a four-horsed chariot mounted by a winged figure of Nike and followed by a horse and rider.

[τ]ωι ἀποκτείνει ἢ τῶν πα[ιδ]-  
 ων τινὰ τῶν Ἀρύββου, εἶν[αι]  
 τὰς αὐτὰς τιμω<ρ>ίας αἰ[περ]  
 [κ]αὶ ὑπὲρ τῶν ἄλλων εἰσ[ιν ν]  
 Ἀθηναίων· ἐπιμελείσθ[αι δ]-  
 ἔ καὶ τοὺς στρατηγόν[ς οἱ ᾄ]-  
 ν στρατηγ[ῶ]σι ὅπως Ἀρ[ύββα]-  
 ς καὶ οἱ παῖδες αὐτοῦ [κομί]-  
 σωνται τὴν ἀρχὴν τὴν [πατρ]-  
 ώιαν.

Thus, first, if anyone should kill Arybbas or his children, he is liable to the same punishments as those laid down on behalf of other citizens. Second, the generals in office at any time are to help Arybbas and his children recover their ancestral realm.

Since Reuss, it has been generally recognized that the Athenians cannot have been sincere in their promise to restore Arybbas to his throne.<sup>3</sup> Philip's expansionism had demanded their attention since the early 350's, and the recovery of Molossis clearly could not have been one of their priorities. Even if the political will were present, the mountainous terrain of Epirus made Molossis inaccessible to Athenian forces. Given these circumstances, the promise to Arybbas is puzzling and requires explanation.

Osborne (II 81f) was the first to offer an account of how this provision came about: Arybbas asked for aid in recovering his kingdom; because this was potentially a contentious issue, the *boule* was reluctant to commit itself; the promise was subsequently voted by the *ekklesia* without serious intent of acting on it. Though no doubt correct mechanically, this view does not explain the provocative nature of the amendment. This applies to the first clause as well as the second. Osborne (II 83) sees this simply as an emphatic statement of protection prompted by the controversial nature of Arybbas' position. But in fact this clause itself was probably quite controversial. Demosthenes devoted most of *Against Aristocrates* of 352/1<sup>4</sup> to attacking the protection clause in the decree giving citizenship to another prominent foreigner, Charidemus. It is not difficult to see why in that case the provision was disputed. Charidemus had been a friend and ally of Philip, and yet had turned to Athens when it suited him.<sup>5</sup> He must

<sup>3</sup> F. Reuss, "König Arybbas von Epeiros," *RhM* 36 (1881) 167; cf. Tod p.217, Osborne II 81.

<sup>4</sup> The date is given by Dion. Hal. *Ad Amm.* 1.4 (725).

<sup>5</sup> For his career see H. Berve, *Das Alexanderreich* II (Munich 1926) no. 823.

have had many enemies in Athens who opposed this grant. Arybbas was in precisely the same position.

The second provision is controversial for different reasons. The promise to restore Arybbas to his throne is clearly programmatic and, together with the first provision, must have been invented by men who had certain political aims.<sup>6</sup> The generals, who had a powerful say in matters discussed by the *boule*,<sup>7</sup> will have formed the primary opposition to making such a pledge even if Arybbas had asked for it. They will not have wanted to be put in the absurd position of being charged with an assignment that they could not carry out. The charge would make them appear as officers who failed to perform their duties.

Given the controversial nature of both provisions, we must explain why the *ekklesia* was persuaded to vote for this amendment. What, therefore, was the background of Arybbas' flight to Athens?

Our literary sources on Arybbas are concerned primarily with the activities of Philip. We first hear of the Molossian king in Book 7 of Justin's epitome of Trogus; he reports that Arybbas arranged for his niece Olympias to be married to Philip, most likely in 357.<sup>8</sup> After this the chronology of their interactions is uncertain, owing to confusing references in our sources. Justin goes on in the same passage to say that the king grew old in exile.<sup>9</sup> Later, when summarizing in Book 8 Philip's actions in Epirus, he says that Philip decided to expel Arybbas and put Alexander, Olympias' brother, on the throne; Philip summoned Alexander to Macedonia in the name of his sister and cor-

<sup>6</sup> Osborne (II 81) calls it "largely cosmetic." The name of the mover of the two provisions, which together form a single amendment, is not stated. Osborne concludes that he is the same man who proposed the main decree; he argues, however, from decrees in which the name of the mover is given. Such instances cannot be used to prove anything about decrees in which no name is given in the amendment.

<sup>7</sup> P. J. Rhodes, *The Athenian Boule*<sup>2</sup> (Oxford 1985) 43–48.

<sup>8</sup> Just. 7.6.10f. The date is based on the birth of Alexander in Hecatombaeon 356 (Plut. *Alex.* 3.5); cf. Errington 41 n.1. A. B. Bosworth, *A Historical Commentary on Arrian's History of Alexander* (Oxford 1980) 46, believes Plutarch's date is wrong and prefers Aristobulus' reported statement that Alexander lived thirty-two years and eight months (*FGrHist* 139F61), thus giving a date in late 356. There is little reason to follow this, for people will have remembered Alexander's birth-date.

<sup>9</sup> Just. 7.6.10–12: *quibus rebus feliciter provenientibus Olympiadam, Neoptolemi, regis Molossorum, filiam, uxorem ducit, conciliante nuptias fratre patrueli, auctore virginis, Arybba, rege Molossorum, qui sororem Olympiadis Troada in matrimonio habebat; quae causa illi exitii malorumque omnium fuit. nam dum regi incrementa adfinitate Philippi adquisiturum sperat, proprio regno ab eodem privatus in exilio consenuit.*

rupted his morals; when Alexander turned twenty, Philip handed over to him the kingdom, from which Arybbas had been expelled.<sup>10</sup>

We have one reference to Arybbas in Demosthenes' *First Olynthiac*, usually dated *ca* mid-349:<sup>11</sup> in listing Philip's various recent expeditions, Demosthenes refers to a *strateia* against Arybbas.<sup>12</sup> This evidence must be interpreted in the light of the account provided by Diodorus: in a chronographic section under 342/1 (archonship of Sosigenes), he says that in this year Arybbas king of the Molossians died after ruling for ten years; he was survived by a son Aeacides, but Alexander the brother of Olympias succeeded to the throne with the support of Philip.<sup>13</sup>

Diodorus, in having Arybbas die on the throne in 342/1, contradicts Justin's assertion that the king was expelled by Philip and grew old in exile. The honorific decree leaves no doubt that Justin is to be accepted, but it is less clear how to make sense of Diodorus, whose details on Alexander are accurate. According to Reuss,<sup>14</sup> Diodorus meant to record under the year 342/1 Arybbas' expulsion, concomitant with Alexander's accession. But as Schaefer noticed,<sup>15</sup> Hegesippus in the speech *On Halonnesus* ([Dem.] 7.32), dated by Dionysius to 343/2,<sup>16</sup> says that Philip handed over the cities of Cassopeia to Alexander. This clearly implies that Alexander was already on the Molossian throne. Consequently Beloch,<sup>17</sup> establishing what was to become the *communis opinio*, dated Arybbas' expulsion and Alexander's accession to 343/2; Arybbas fled at once to Athens, where he was given citizenship and where he died in the following year.

<sup>10</sup> Just. 8.6.4–7: *sed nec a proximis manus abstinet; siquidem Arrybam, regem Epiri, uxori suae Olympiadi artissima cognatione iunctum, pellere regno statuit atque Alexandrum, privignum eius, uxoris Olympiadis fratrem, puerum honestae pulchritudinis, in Macedoniam nomine sororis arcessit, omnique studio sollicitatum spe regni simulato amore ad stupri consuetudinem perpulit, maiora in eo obsequia habiturus sive conscientiae pudore sive regni beneficio. cum igitur ad XX annos pervenisset, ereptum Arrybae regnum puero admodum tradit, scelestus in utroque. nam nec in eo ius cognationis servavit, cui ademit regnum, et eum, cui dedit, inpudicum fecit ante quam regem.*

<sup>11</sup> A. Schaefer, *Demosthenes und seine Zeit*<sup>2</sup> II (Leipzig 1886) 126.

<sup>12</sup> Dem. 1.13: τὰς δ' ἐπ' Ἰλλυριοῦς καὶ Παίονας αὐτοῦ καὶ πρὸς Ἀρύββαν καὶ ὅποι τις ἂν εἴποι παραλείπω στρατείας.

<sup>13</sup> Diod. 16.72.1: ἐπὶ δὲ τούτων Ἀρύμβας ὁ τῶν Μολοττῶν βασιλεὺς ἐτελεύτησεν ἄρξας ἔτη δέκα, ἀπολιπὼν υἱὸν τὸν Πύρρου πατέρα Αἰακίδην· τὴν δ' ἀρχὴν διεδέξατο Ἀλέξανδρος ὁ ἀδελφὸς Ὀλυμπιάδος, συνεργήσαντος Φιλίππου τοῦ Μακεδόνοιο.

<sup>14</sup> *Supra* n.3: 161–67.

<sup>15</sup> *Supra* n.11: 425f.

<sup>16</sup> Dion. Hal. *Ad Amm.* 1.10 (739).

<sup>17</sup> *Griechische Geschichte* II (Strassburg 1897) 543 n.3, with a fuller explanation in the second edition of 1922 (III.2<sup>2</sup> 292).

And yet, as Errington has shown (45–48), certain chronological difficulties remain. The traditional solutions do not reconcile Diodorus' claim of a ten-year rule for Arybbas with the fact that he was king by at least 357, if not earlier. Nor do they make sense of Demosthenes' reference to a campaign against Arybbas before mid-349. Moreover, by allowing only one year for Arybbas' Athenian retirement, they ignore Justin's statement that the king "grew old in exile."

On Errington's chronology, Philip at some point after his marriage to Olympias sent for Alexander to live at Pella.<sup>18</sup> The final step in Philip's dealings with Arybbas came when he expelled the Molossian from his throne and installed Alexander; the *terminus ante quem* for this action is the delivery of the *First Olynthiac*. Upon his expulsion, Arybbas went directly to Athens, where he died in 342/1. This view makes sense of Diodorus' statement (which, as Errington showed, should be accepted) that Arybbas ruled ten years, *i.e.*, from approximately 359 to the spring of 349 at the latest; it also gives the king time to grow old in exile.

Griffith, following Reuss' chronology, has objected to Errington's on the grounds that Diodorus meant to record under the year 342/1 not Arybbas' death in exile but his flight to Athens and Alexander's accession; this date, he claims, is inconsistent with an accession date of 349 for Alexander.<sup>19</sup> Yet he fails to reconcile the date of 342/1 with his own admission that Alexander was on the throne by 343/2. Moreover, he does not adequately explain Demosthenes' *Olynthiac* reference to a campaign against Arybbas. Despite these problems, Griffith's view remains the standard one, and is followed by Osborne, who rejects Errington's without argument.

In addition to making sense of most of the conflicting sources, Errington's chronology finds support in the circumstances surrounding Arybbas' expulsion. Philip would not have bothered to attack and expel the king if the Molossian situation were stable. He had had control over Arybbas' policies ever since Alexander came to Pella. In this sense, Alexander was like any other hostage—for example Cersobleptes' son, whom Philip seized probably during his Thracian campaign in 346.<sup>20</sup> Alexander, however, was a different sort of weapon: he was in effect a pretender, whom Philip could put on the Molossian

<sup>18</sup> Just. 8.6.4–6; Errington 49. No date is given for this action; for a conjecture see n.43 *infra*.

<sup>19</sup> N. G. L. Hammond and G. T. Griffith, *A History of Macedonia II* (Oxford 1979) 308 n.3.

<sup>20</sup> Σ Aeschin. 2.81; Schaefer (*supra* n.11) 247. For the probable date see E. Badian, "Philip II and Thrace," *Pulpuveva* 4 (1980) 62.

throne at any time and whom he could rely on to support Macedon's interests. This was no small threat to Arybbas' rule, and so we can presume that when it no longer sufficed to control his actions, he had done something truly unforgivable.

At the same time, Athens would not have taken Arybbas in and honored him unless he had done something truly commendable. This could be only one thing: he must have negotiated regarding an alliance with Athens. (Since there is no trace of an alliance, we cannot be certain it was concluded.) This suggestion is supported by the size of the stele: as Osborne notes,<sup>21</sup> it is the largest we have for an individual, and so was clearly meant as a special honor for Arybbas. The grant of citizenship to Phormio and Carphinas of Acarnania provides an illustrative parallel. They were rewarded for opposing Philip and fighting with the Athenians at Chaeronea; as in the case of Arybbas, their grant was a reaffirmation of one made to their grandfather.<sup>22</sup>

Arybbas' motives for alliance can be conjectured. He will have sought protection against Philip when the Macedonian was enjoying great success. Uneasy because his nephew was residing in Pella, he was afraid that Molossis would be the next target of Macedonian conquest. Arybbas knew, however, that he could not make a move if Philip was in the vicinity. Philip's Thracian expedition provided the perfect opportunity: at this time he will have approached Athens, with which his family had long had ties.<sup>23</sup>

We can posit dates for Arybbas' negotiations with Athens and Philip's reaction, for which we have the well-attested parallel of Olynthus. As we have noted, Philip was in Thrace during the second half of 352,<sup>24</sup> where he fell ill in autumn (Dem. 1.13, 3.4f). We know that upon recovering the following spring, he made a brief raid on Olynthus, for it is mentioned in the *First Philippic* late in the archon year 352/1.<sup>25</sup> His reasons are clear: the Olynthians had taken the opportunity provided by his absence in Thrace to approach Athens. Philip did little more than remonstrate with Olynthus at this time, for a campaign there was a major undertaking. That would have to wait

<sup>21</sup> Osborne I 57, suggesting that the original height was approximately four meters.

<sup>22</sup> Osborne I D-16, II 84f.

<sup>23</sup> Tharyps, Arybbas' grandfather: Thuc. 2.80.6, Just. 17.3.10f; Alcetas and Neoptolemus: Bengtson, *Staatsvertr.* II 257.109f. Cf. lines 3-7 of our inscription.

<sup>24</sup> Griffith (*supra* n.19) 281f. I cannot accept T. R. Martin's argument dating the Thracian campaign ("Diodorus, Philip II and Thessaly in the 350s B.C.," *CP* 76 [1981] 198-200); detailed discussion in J. Heskell, *The Foreign Policy of Philip II down to the Peace of Philocrates* (diss. Harvard 1987) 143 n.33.

<sup>25</sup> Dem. 4.17, cf. 1.13. Dion. Hal. *Ad Amm.* 1.4 (725) provides the date of the *First Philippic*, which was defended by Jaeger (*Demosthenes* [Berkeley 1938] 120f) and later by Sealey (*REG* 68 [1955] 77f) and is now generally accepted.

until he had made extensive preparations. The raid, however, had its effects. It must be at this time, as Griffith suggests, that the Olynthian democracy banished the leaders who had supported an Athenian alliance: among them was an Apollonides, mentioned twice in the *Third Philippic*.<sup>26</sup>

It was probably soon after the raid on Olynthus that Philip moved against Arybbas: Molossian attempts for an Athenian *rapprochement*, too, could not be tolerated. Speedy action was facilitated by the fact that this expedition will not have required the same effort needed for Chalcidice. Philip thus went to Epirus in late 351 or in 350. By some time in 350 at the latest, therefore, Arybbas had fled to Athens and reaffirmed his citizenship. That the decree was passed soon after his arrival is shown by the invitation to him to dine in the prytaneum.<sup>27</sup>

This background provides the immediate context for our assessment of the Athenians' unusual promise to Arybbas. We must now consider the general situation in northern and central Greece in the late 350's, especially in Thessaly. It was probably in early 353 that civil war had broken out again between the Aleuads of Larissa, in charge of the forces of the Thessalian League, and the tyrants of Pherae, who were trying to assert control over the league.<sup>28</sup> Philip intervened in behalf of the Aleuads. The war escalated into a front of the Sacred War when Lycophron called on his Phocian allies for help. In spring 352 Philip won an overwhelming victory on the coast of the Gulf of Pagasae in a region called Crocus Field.<sup>29</sup> Lycophron and Peitholaus handed over Pherae to him and were allowed to flee to Phocis with 2,000 mercenaries.

We can trace the tyrants' activities for another year after this. Diodorus, our fullest source on Thessalian affairs in this period, mentions them in his account of the war between Sparta and Megalopolis (16.39.3): the Spartans were reinforced by 3,000 infantry from the Phocians and 150 cavalry from Lycophron and Peitholaus, presumably part of their 2,000 mercenaries. It is difficult to say whether the tyrants themselves took part in the hostilities. It is more likely that they stayed in Phocis for the duration of the war,<sup>30</sup> which lasted until

<sup>26</sup> Dem. 9.56, 66; Griffith (*supra* n.19) 299.

<sup>27</sup> Compare the usual treatment of Athenian ambassadors.

<sup>28</sup> Diod. 16.35.1–6. For the date of the beginning of the war see Heskell (*supra* n.24) 137–40.

<sup>29</sup> It has been called this by scholars since Beloch's identification in 1897 (*supra* n.17: 487).

<sup>30</sup> The Greek suggests that the Pheraeans simply sent aid: οἱ δὲ Λακεδαιμόνιοι τρισχιλίους μὲν πεζοὺς παρὰ Φωκίων προσελάβοντο, ἰππεῖς δὲ ἑκατὸν καὶ πεντήκοντα παρὰ Λυκόφρονος καὶ Πειθολάου τῶν ἐκπεπτωκότων ἐκ τῆς ἐν Φεραῖς τυραννίδος.

mid-351.<sup>31</sup>

Lycophron and Peitholaus, then, were biding their time in Phocis, waiting no doubt for an opportunity to return to Thessaly. Aid for that endeavor was unlikely to come in the near future from the Phocians: after Crocus Field they stayed out of Thessaly and in fact were involved only in skirmishes and raids in central Greece.<sup>32</sup>

These circumstances allow an insight into the novel promise in the Arybbas decree. For while it was not actual policy to help Arybbas recover his kingdom, announcement of that objective apparently was the goal of some in the assembly who wanted to see a more active stance taken against Philip and who thought that deposed kings could be useful in this regard. By proclaiming support for Arybbas, these men wished to publicize Athenian interest in supporting other rulers who had been expelled by Philip. We do not know whether they had a specific ruler in mind when they proposed the amendment, but they must have known about the Pheraean tyrants in Phocis. Moreover, Thrace was of great concern during the late 350's. Athens had made an alliance with Cersebleptes in 353/2,<sup>33</sup> and after Philip's failure to take Heraion Teichos in 352 (Dem. 3.4f) it was all too clear that he planned to return one day to try again. We should not overlook the possibility that there was a fugitive Thracian king somewhere about, whom our record does not happen to mention.<sup>34</sup> The activists who wanted to make use of Arybbas may even have been the same Athenians who had recently convinced the assembly to grant citizenship and other rewards to Charidemus and who currently supported the establishment of the forts in Thrace.<sup>35</sup>

We do not hear of any effect the Arybbas decree may have had in Thrace, but news of the Athenian proclamation will have reached the Pheraean tyrants quickly, since the Athenians had friends in Phocis. Lycophron and Peitholaus accepted the 'invitation' and went at once to Athens, probably in 350. Apollodorus, in the speech *Against Neaera*, speaks of a "Peitholas the Thessalian and Apollonides the Olynthian who after receiving Athenian citizenship were deprived of it by the court" ([Dem.] 59.91). Aristotle refers in passing to someone

<sup>31</sup> The date derives from Diod. 16.39.7–40.1: the Thebans, who had contributed forces to their Arcadian allies, returned home after peace was made, and were back in Boeotia by early in the archon year 351/0.

<sup>32</sup> Diod. 16.40.2; Diodorus has nothing further to report of them for approximately three years thereafter.

<sup>33</sup> Diod. 16.34.4; *Staatsvertr.* II 319.

<sup>34</sup> As Badian points out (*supra* n.20: 64 n.52), we do not know what happened to Amadocus after 352.

<sup>35</sup> For this policy see Badian (*supra* n.20) 64f.



speaking against Lycophron and Peitholaus in court (*Rh.* 1410a). As the speech of Apollodorus can be dated to the late 340's,<sup>36</sup> "Peitholas the Thessalian" must be the same Peitholaus, and "Apollonides the Olynthian" must be the one who had been banished from Olynthus after Philip's raid in 351. We can reconstruct the events as follows: Lycophron and Peitholaus were given citizenship shortly after their arrival in Athens. The grant reflects the interests of those who wanted to use the tyrants' presence for their own political goals.<sup>37</sup> Aristotle's statement shows that there was opposition to the grant. At some later date, Peitholaus' citizenship was revoked; as Lycophron is not mentioned, we can assume that he was dead by then.

We have one other piece of evidence regarding Peitholaus. According to Diodorus, in 349/8 Philip moved against the cities of Chalcidice; then, interrupting this operation, he attacked Pherae and expelled Peitholaus, who was in control of the city.<sup>38</sup> Peitholaus must have just returned there from Athens. Upon his second expulsion, he went back to Athens, where later he appeared in court and, along with Apollonides, was deprived of citizenship. Apollodorus' joint reference to the court's treatment of these two men, not (to our knowledge) previously connected, provides the date for its action. This reflects a major change in Athenian policy, and accordingly should be dated after the Peace of Philocrates in 346: after peace and alliance had been established with Philip, Athens could not allow his enemies to retain Athenian citizenship given them as a reward for their opposition to him. After this Peitholaus and Apollonides disappear from our sources.

Now that we have placed the Arybbas inscription in its proper historical context, we can return to an important feature of the stele: the emphatic display of Arybbas' Olympic and Pythian victories. It was suggested by Walter<sup>39</sup> that the two Olympic crowns refer to victories Arybbas won in competition with Philip. This however is unlikely for one important reason: Philip, like Arybbas, took first prize in the chariot race when he competed in 356 (*Plut. Alex.* 3.7); as there is no evidence that Philip ever competed again and lost (and one might expect his enemies to mention it), we cannot claim that Aryb-

<sup>36</sup> F. Blass, *Die attische Beredsamkeit*<sup>2</sup> III.1 (Leipzig 1893) 536.

<sup>37</sup> Detailed discussion of their goals is beyond the scope of this paper; see Heskell (*supra* n.24) 154f.

<sup>38</sup> Diod. 16.52.9. Although Griffith (*supra* n.19: 320f) believes this is an error for someone else, there is no good reason to reject Diodorus here; Martin, *Sovereignty and Coinage in Classical Greece* (Princeton 1985) 98f, accepts Diodorus.

<sup>39</sup> O. Walter, *WJh* 32 (1940) 9f, accepted by Osborne I 57.

bas defeated him. Clearly this decoration was meant to commemorate Arybbas' rivalry with Philip—and indeed his superiority, from the perspective that the Molossian took first prize in more competitions.

Given the attention the stele pays to Arybbas' crowns, it is important for us to know when they were won. The second Olympic contest is the least problematic. As Philip won in the Olympic chariot-race of 356, Arybbas' second Olympic victory is likely to come later, therefore in 352.<sup>40</sup> His competition at this time is a sign of his developing independence and should be viewed in conjunction with his reestablishment of ties with Athens during Philip's absence in Thrace.

We can now date Arybbas' first Olympic victory. Only one year is possible, 360. It is an obvious conjecture that he entered these games straight after becoming sole ruler,<sup>41</sup> as a way of giving the Greek world striking notice of his accession. If that is the case, the contest enables us to narrow Errington's range for the start of Arybbas' sole rule to late 361 or early 360.

Our solution, however, raises a new set of problems. First, the date of the Pythian victory. There are two possibilities. If Arybbas entered the games of 357, this was his first opportunity to compete after his sole accession and therefore should be connected with his victory of 360.<sup>42</sup> It is thus a sign of his continued ambition, which was furthered by the marriage alliance with Philip the same year. Alternatively, Arybbas may have competed in the games of 353. In this case the competition should be linked to the victory of 352. It would be our earliest evidence of the king's attempt to convince the world that he still mattered, and would mark the beginning of the defensive phase, which resulted in the turn towards Athens.

The gaps in our sources make it impossible to know which date is correct, and raise further questions. Since Arybbas won Olympic victories in 360 and 352, we may wonder why he did not enter the competition of 356, especially if he had won at the Pythia in 357. Or did he in fact compete, and lose to Philip? Again, no answer is possible. The uncertainty about the date of the Pythian victory is a symptom of our basic ignorance of Arybbas' career and itself con-

<sup>40</sup> For the dates of the Olympic games, held every fourth year in summer, see S. G. Miller, *AthMitt* 90 (1975) 215–31.

<sup>41</sup> After the death of Alcetas, the date of which is unknown (a *terminus post quem* of 377 is given by the decree of Aristoteles, *Staatsvertr.* II 257.1–5), Arybbas and his older brother Neoptolemus struggled for the throne and then ruled jointly until the latter's death (Paus. 1.11.3).

<sup>42</sup> The Pythian games were held every fourth year in summer, in the third year of the Olympiad: see L. R. Farnell, *Cults of the Greek States* IV (Oxford 1907) 291, 421.

tributes to the difficulty of understanding him in detail.

Despite these uncertainties, we may draw some surprising and inescapable conclusions. As Arybbas had participated in the Olympic games before Philip, our picture of their relations must be substantially altered. Arybbas in 360 was an ambitious king on the fringe of the Greek world who saw the games as a way of improving his position on the international stage. He made an alliance with Philip in 357 in the hope that it would help him further his international ambitions. This arrangement well suited Philip, who, as a young king interested in expanding his power beyond his borders, saw in Arybbas a potentially useful ally. Thus it is likely that Arybbas was Philip's model for entering the games in 356. This is all the more compelling when we consider that for generations no Macedonian had competed at Olympia.

Philip, however, in his quest for hegemony, soon eclipsed Arybbas. The Macedonian asserted his predominance by summoning Alexander to his court, and Arybbas was not in a position to object. In 352 he reasserted his stature by winning a second Olympic crown<sup>43</sup> and thereby outclassing the king who probably had made great play of his own victory. Philip's absence (and perhaps illness) in Thrace provided him the opportunity to break away and make contact with Athens. This explains why Philip, after recovering from his illness, lost no time in moving against him, and with overpowering military force.

Although the king had made a strong beginning to his reign, he was in the end unable to compete with his Macedonian rival. He simply did not have the talents of a Philip; nor, locked away in his remote corner, did he have the opportunities offered by the situation and resources of Macedonia. Years later, his not-so-distant successor, Pyrrhus, a more brilliant man, would find himself outmatched by those same resources.

Our inscription, viewed in the context of the events of the 350's, reveals some important aspects of the policies of Arybbas, Philip, and Athens during this period. Although the Molossian himself did not have a high priority in official Athenian policy later in the decade, clearly he was used by the avid opponents of Philip to proclaim the city's willingness to take active measures to support the Macedonian's

<sup>43</sup> One may wonder from Arybbas' actions whether Alexander had been summoned to Pella (see *supra*) shortly before this, for that would help explain his interest in making a public statement at this moment and turning to Athens as soon as opportunity offered.

enemies. At the same time, the decree explains how the Pheraean tyrants came to follow Arybbas to Athens.

But the implications of the decree go far beyond that. We can see that Arybbas was a major figure in international politics at the beginning of the decade, and in fact had an important effect on the early career of Philip. Because of the silence of the sources, however, the details of Arybbas' personal development and his interplay with Philip remain a mystery. But at least we now know there is a mystery.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> I wish to thank Professor E. Badian for his advice throughout the preparation of this paper. Any errors that remain are my own.